

Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, in Groton, Connecticut, which is a community right on Long Island Sound, The Day Newspaper of New London hosted a job fair for the surrounding area, which I had the opportunity to attend for about an hour or so. And the good news is that there were 16 companies that were there, employers who had job openings who, again, were anxious to use the job fair as a chance to meet face-to-face with folks who attended.

The distressing news, though, was that there were over 800 people who showed up for the event. The line wound out from the ballroom of the Groton Inn and Suites through the lobby and onto the sidewalk and into the parking lot; and, clearly, if anyone who was attending there, it was quite obvious that there was not even close to the number of openings to match up with the number of people who were in attendance.

As I said, I had a chance to visit for a while, walked around, talked to a number of people, and was struck by the fact that the number one question on people's minds who, again, were carrying heavy burdens, some of them who had been out of work for as much as 18 months, 2 years, a lot of young people who just graduated from college, carrying student loans, anxious to try and get a start in life and a way to pay the bills, the question was, Well, is Congress going to shut down the government?

And it seemed sort of a little bit out of sync with the reality of what was going on in the room. But, in fact, thinking about it, I mean, it's very clear that the people there understood instinctively that a government shutdown in roughly 8 or 9 days is exactly the wrong thing that the U.S. economy needs right now, particularly in terms of fostering job growth and giving people confidence about the future.

That event, compounded by a debt limit showdown, which now the Treasury Department announced this morning that on October 17 the borrowing authority of the U.S. Treasury, the full faith and credit of our country, is actually going to expire in terms of being able to pay the bills for our Nation.

Whether it's our troops over in Afghanistan, whether it's the folks who protect us at our airports, whether it's the FBI, the Coast Guard which, again, my district is home of the Coast Guard Academy, the notion that our Nation, which has always honored its full faith and credit over the 230-plus years of its history, would somehow be put into doubt is, again, another one of these self-inflicted body blows that this institution is on the verge of inflicting, again, on a very fragile economy.

When you looked in the faces of the people who were at that job fair yesterday, I'm very proud of the fact that I come from a State with very high educational attainment levels, really, in

the top five in the country. What was clear was that you were talking to people who were, in many instances, very experienced employees, working in manufacturing, pharmaceutical, retail businesses, many of them with certainly strong educational backgrounds, with college degrees and post-college degrees.

They're ready. They're ready to go out and support themselves and their families; and talking to them about food stamps, or this type of public assistance or that type of public assistance, that's not what they're looking for. They're looking for an economy that has a horizon so that employers and budget-makers and individuals who are so critical in terms of investment decisions in this country are going to have confidence about the fact that we're not going to capsize the world's financial markets by, basically, threatening the value of U.S. Treasury bonds, which is still the number one security in the world today.

The question is whether in a month's time that's still going to be the case.

It is time for this institution to start focusing on what people really get up and worry about every single day, which is about jobs, the economy, and the future of their families.

I don't want to end on a totally depressing note, and I want to end on a positive note. In the first week of August, I had the privilege to be at the Oval Office for a bill signing on the student loan legislation, which cut the interest rates on the Stafford Loan program from 6.8 percent to 3.8 percent.

Again, as a member of the Education Committee, this is an issue I've been working on for a number of years. It was a hard-fought compromise to get that measure to the President's desk in August. We'll save thousands of dollars for middle class families and for students who are going to college.

But the fact is that we were standing there behind President Obama with the Republican chairman of the Education Committee to my left; the Independent Senator from Maine, ANGUS KING, to my right; and other Democrats and Republicans who were in the room.

The fact of the matter is that event showed that, when we do our duty in this institution, when people actually recognize that we're not here as part of a debate club, we're not here to read "Green Eggs and Ham," like the circus that's going on over in the Senate right now; but that we're here to do our work and to pass measures to protect America's middle class.

Let's get the jobs of this country growing again. Let's pass a budget. Let's protect America's full faith and credit in the next couple of weeks or so, and then this economy is poised to grow, and we're going to help those people who were lined up yesterday in Groton, Connecticut.

## COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, September 24, 2013.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*The Speaker, House of Representatives,*  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 24, 2013 at 11:48 a.m.:

That the Senate passed with amendments H.R. 1412.

With best wishes, I am,  
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

## RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

## AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) at 2 p.m.

## PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As the remaining days of the fiscal year wind down, forget not Your people. There are many differences plaguing our Nation's discourse. Please send wisdom upon the leaders serving in government and goodwill among all the principals in current negotiations.

We thank You for the service of so many who work every day in this building, whose labor provides the lubrication for the very public actions of the Members of this assembly.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

## THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.